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ABSTRACT

This is a report on foreign language enrollment in grades 9-12 in Indiana for the year 1978-1979. The tables give the following information: (1) a ten year review of foreign language enrollments in Indiana, grades 9-12; (2) the total enrollments for the years 1976-1979 in all foreign languages; (3) the enrollment patterns by levels for the same years; (4) the attrition rates between levels one and two in French, German, Latin, Russian, and Spanish covering the ten year period, 1969-1979; (5) class sizes in 1978-1979 in the five languages; (6) attrition rates in foreign languages within 1978-1979; and (7) the situation in other disciplines in 1978-1979. Questions are raised regarding the high attrition rates between levels one and two in the commonly taught languages and the need to provide for a wide range of abilities among students. It is noted that reasons for Latin and Russian enrollment problems are somewhat different from those of the other languages. It is also pointed out that attrition rates in Spanish are of concern to all foreign language teachers because Spanish represents half of all the enrollments. (AMH)

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# indiana university's foreign-language dialog

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VOLUME XIV | September 1979 | Number 3

## A TEN YEAR REVIEW OF FOREIGN-LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS IN INDIANA: GRADES 9-12

| Year | French | German | Latin | Russian | Spanish | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1969-70 | 28,064 | 14,144 | 15,632 | 540 | 42,680 | 101,060 |
| 1970-71 | 28,129 | 13,967 | 13,408 | 417 | 43,870 | 99,791 |
| 1971-72 | 26,503 | 13,623 | 11,777 | 348 | 46,123 | 98,374 |
| 1972-73 | 24,895 | 13,077 | 9,708 | 261 | 45,310 | 93,251 |
| 1973-74 | 23,185 | 13,276 | 7,963 | 214 | 44,582 | 89,220 |
| 1974-75 | 22,501 | 13,804 | 7,126 | 174 | 43,859 | 87,464 |
| 1975-76 | 20,384 | 13,206 | 6,670 | 96 | 42,795 | 83,151 |
| 1976-77 | 19,672 | 12,931 | 6,261 | 160 | 42,263 | 81,287 |
| 1977-78 | 20,598 | 12,741 | 5,631 | 114 | 42,008 | 80,092 |
| 1978-79 | 20,057 | 11,341 | 5,292 | 47 | 37,120 | 73,857 |

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342 students are enrolled in a category "Other Foreign Languages."

20.6% of the student population grades 9-12 were enrolled in foreign languages. Of those students in languages, 27% are in French, 15% in German, 7% in Latin, and 50% in Spanish.

## THE TOTAL ENROLLMENT PICTURE: GRADES 9-12

| | Level I | Level II | Advanced Levels III-VI | Total | Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FRENCH | | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 9,742 | 6,383 | 3,547 | 19,672 | |
| 1977-78 | 10,755 | 6,346 | 3,497 | 20,598 | |
| 1978-79 | 10,437 | 6,409 | 3,211 | 20,057 | - 3.0% |
| GERMAN | | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 6,484 | 4,151 | 2,316 | 12,931 | |
| 1977-78 | 6,298 | 4,169 | 2,274 | 12,741 | |
| 1978-79 | 5,582 | 3,694 | 2,065 | 11,341 | -11.0% |
| LATIN | | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 3,836 | 1,910 | 515 | 6,261 | |
| 1977-78 | 3,290 | 1,853 | 488 | 5,631 | |
| 1978-79 | 3,222 | 1,631 | 439 | 5,292 | - 6.0% |
| RUSSIAN | | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 108 | 33 | 19 | 160 | |
| 1977-78 | 54 | 48 | 12 | 114 | |
| 1978-79 | 33 | 14 | 0 | 47 | -59.0% |
| SPANISH | | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 24,251 | 12,509 | 5,503 | 42,263 | |
| 1977-78 | 23,622 | 12,770 | 5,616 | 42,008 | |
| 1978-79 | 20,400 | 11,506 | 5,214 | 37,120 | -12.0% |
| ALL LANGUAGES | | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 44,421 | 24,986 | 11,900 | 81,287 | |
| 1977-78 | 44,019 | 25,186 | 11,887 | 80,092 | |
| 1978-79 | 39,674 | 23,254 | 10,929 | 73,857 | - 8.0% |
| MODERN LANGUAGES | | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 40,585 | 23,076 | 11,385 | 75,026 | |
| 1977-78 | 40,729 | 23,333 | 11,399 | 75,461 | |
| 1978-79 | 36,452 | 21,623 | 10,490 | 68,565 | - 9.0% |

THE ENROLLMENT PATTERNS BY LEVELS

| | First Year | Second Year | First and Second Years | Third through Sixth Years |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FRENCH | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 50% | 32% | 82% | 18% |
| 1977-78 | 52% | 31% | 83% | 17% |
| 1978-79 | 52% | 32% | 84% | 16% |
| GERMAN | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 50% | 32% | 82% | 18% |
| 1977-78 | 49% | 33% | 82% | 18% |
| 1978-79 | 49% | 33% | 82% | 18% |
| LATIN | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 61% | 31% | 92% | 8% |
| 1977-78 | 58% | 33% | 91% | 9% |
| 1978-79 | 61% | 31% | 92% | 8% |
| RUSSIAN | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 67% | 21% | 88% | 12% |
| 1977-78 | 47% | 42% | 89% | 11% |
| 1978-79 | 70% | 30% | 100% | 0% |
| SPANISH | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 57% | 30% | 87% | 13% |
| 1977-78 | 56% | 30% | 86% | 14% |
| 1978-79 | 55% | 31% | 86% | 14% |
| ALL LANGUAGES | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 54% | 31% | 85% | 15% |
| 1977-78 | 55% | 32% | 87% | 13% |
| 1978-79 | 54% | 31% | 85% | 15% |
| MODERN LANGUAGES | | | | |
| 1976-77 | 54% | 31% | 85% | 15% |
| 1977-78 | 54% | 31% | 85% | 15% |
| 1978-79 | 53% | 32% | 85% | 15% |

## THE ATTRITION RATES BETWEEN LEVELS ONE AND TWO

The attrition rates between levels one and two in each of the commonly taught languages continue high. It is well past time for teachers to cease asking, "Will I have a class?", and to begin to examine what proportion of the total number enrolled in the first year is continuing into the second.

### FRENCH

| Year | Level I | Level II | Number of Students Lost | Rate of Attrition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1969-70 | 12,823 | 10,205 | 3,718 | 27% |
| 1970-71 | 12,980 | 9,707 | 3,116 | 24% |
| 1971-72 | 12,679 | 9,138 | 3,842 | 30% |
| 1972-73 | 11,532 | 8,569 | 4,110 | 32% |
| 1973-74 | 10,762 | 7,865 | 3,667 | 32% |
| 1974-75 | 10,662 | 7,464 | 3,298 | 31% |
| 1975-76 | 9,837 | 6,807 | 3,855 | 36% |
| 1976-77 | 9,742 | 6,383 | 3,454 | 35% |
| 1977-78 | 10,755 | 6,346 | 3,396 | 35% |
| 1978-79 | 10,437 | 6,409 | 4,346 | 40% |

## THE ATTRITION RATES BETWEEN LEVELS ONE AND TWO

Foreign-language teachers have centered their attention upon actively recruiting a larger segment of the total student population into the first year of study, working to dispel the idea that language study is important to the "elite" or to the college-bound, but the rates of attrition between levels one and two seem to indicate that these efforts at recruitment do not yet extend to holding students already enrolled in the sequence. More attention must be paid to the needs of these students of widely variant abilities.

### GERMAN

| Year | Level I | Level II | Number of Students Lost | Rate of Attrition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1969-70 | 6,968 | 5,020 | 2,826 | 36% |
| 1970-71 | 6,685 | 4,786 | 2,182 | 31% |
| 1971-72 | 6,749 | 4,503 | 2,182 | 31% |
| 1972-73 | 6,449 | 4,487 | 2,362 | 34% |
| 1973-74 | 6,888 | 4,166 | 2,283 | 35% |
| 1974-75 | 6,991 | 4,541 | 2,347 | 34% |
| 1975-76 | 6,531 | 4,465 | 2,526 | 36% |
| 1976-77 | 6,484 | 4,151 | 2,380 | 36% |
| 1977-78 | 6,298 | 4,169 | 2,315 | 36% |
| 1978-79 | 5,582 | 3,694 | 2,604 | 41% |

## THE ATTRITION RATES BETWEEN LEVELS ONE AND TWO

The teachers of Latin, Russian, and German, who historically tend to begin the sequence with first-year classes of a smaller size than those of French or Spanish, have a stronger reason to make every effort to retain greater numbers of students into the second year, for the greater the attrition, the greater the chances that the class may not be offered at all.

### LATIN

| Year | Level I | Level II | Number of Students Lost | Rate of Attrition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1969-70 | 8,903 | 5,572 | 4,020 | 42% |
| 1970-71 | 7,503 | 4,992 | 3,911 | 44% |
| 1971-72 | 6,845 | 4,001 | 3,502 | 47% |
| 1972-73 | 5,343 | 3,376 | 3,469 | 51% |
| 1973-74 | 4,629 | 2,566 | 2,777 | 52% |
| 1974-75 | 4,279 | 2,286 | 2,343 | 51% |
| 1975-76 | 4,055 | 2,095 | 2,184 | 51% |
| 1976-77 | 3,836 | 1,910 | 2,145 | 53% |
| 1977-78 | 3,290 | 1,853 | 1,983 | 48% |
| 1978-79 | 3,222 | 1,631 | 1,659 | 50% |

The problems of Latin enrollments are probably intensified by a kind of "mythology" that says one year of study is sufficient to improve one's command of English vocabulary or to give one a good background for the study of other languages. Anxious Latin teachers themselves have contributed to this situation, leading to numbers of highschool seniors enrolling for first-year Latin.

## THE ATTRITION RATES BETWEEN LEVELS ONE AND TWO

The enrollments in Russian have been so low over the past ten years that it is hard to generalize any conclusions from them; it can be seen that the teachers continue to try to retain students in their programs, but Russian offerings are disappearing from the secondary school curriculum in Indiana.

### RUSSIAN

| Year | Level I | Level II | Number of Students Lost | Rate of Attrition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1969-70 | 268 | 200 | 94 | 32% |
| 1970-71 | 177 | 183 | 83 | 32% |
| 1971-72 | 146 | 143 | 34 | 29% |
| 1972-73 | 122 | 87 | 59 | 40% |
| 1973-74 | 121 | 58 | 64 | 52% |
| 1974-75 | 77 | 79 | 42 | 35% |
| 1975-76 | 55 | 34 | 43 | 56% |
| 1976-77 | 108 | 33 | 22 | 40% |
| 1977-78 | 54 | 48 | 60 | 44% |
| 1978-79 | 33 | 14 | 40 | 74% |

## THE ATTRITION RATES BETWEEN LEVELS ONE AND TWO

While the attrition rates in individual languages are of concern to teachers seeking to extend the sequences and to perpetuate the study of languages beyond the student's secondary-school experience, the attrition rates in Spanish are of concern to all foreign-language teachers because of the great numbers of students involved. These attrition rates impact heavily on all second-language education, for Spanish holds half of all the enrollments.

### SPANISH

| Year | Level I | Level II | Number of Students Lost | Rate of Attrition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1969-70 | 23,169 | 14,472 | 7,664 | 35% |
| 1970-71 | 24,187 | 13,977 | 9,192 | 40% |
| 1971-72 | 25,142 | 15,234 | 8,953 | 37% |
| 1972-73 | 24,546 | 14,788 | 10,354 | 41% |
| 1973-74 | 24,212 | 14,220 | 10,326 | 42% |
| 1974-75 | 24,167 | 13,657 | 10,555 | 44% |
| 1975-76 | 24,377 | 12,977 | 11,190 | 46% |
| 1976-77 | 24,251 | 12,509 | 11,868 | 49% |
| 1977-78 | 23,622 | 12,770 | 11,481 | 53% |
| 1978-79 | 20,400 | 11,506 | 12,116 | 51% |

## CLASS SIZES IN 1978-79 IN INDIANA

| Language by Years | Number of Sections | Total Enrolled | Average Class Size* |
|---|---|---|---|
| FRENCH | | | |
| 1st Year | 533 | 10,437 | 19 |
| 2nd Year | 379 | 6,409 | 17 |
| Advanced** | 238 | 3,211 | 13 |
| GERMAN | | | |
| 1st Year | 309 | 5,582 | 18 |
| 2nd Year | 213 | 3,694 | 17 |
| Advanced** | 153 | 2,065 | 13 |
| LATIN | | | |
| 1st Year | 186 | 3,222 | 17 |
| 2nd Year | 124 | 1,631 | 13 |
| Advanced** | 40 | 439 | 11 |
| RUSSIAN | | | |
| 1st Year | 3 | 33 | 11 |
| 2nd Year | 2 | 14 | 7 |
| Advanced** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| SPANISH | | | |
| 1st Year | 1,017 | 20,400 | 20 |
| 2nd Year | 631 | 11,506 | 18 |
| Advanced** | 367 | 5,214 | 14 |

* Rounded off to nearest whole number.
** The "Advanced" designation includes all levels third year and above.

## ATTRITION RATES WITHIN 1978-79

Guidance counselors and administrators are frequently blamed by foreign-language teachers whenever enrollments are discussed, but what actually happens to those students who have enrolled--who are in our classrooms--in the course of a schoolyear?

| Language by Years | First Semester Enrollments | Second Semester Enrollments | Number of Students Lost | Attrition Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FRENCH | | | | |
| 1st Year | 11,276 | 10,437 | 839 | 7.0% |
| 2nd Year | 6,684 | 6,409 | 275 | 5.0% |
| Advanced * | 3,625 | 3,211 | 414 | 11.0% |
| GERMAN | | | | |
| 1st Year | 5,975 | 5,582 | 393 | 7.0% |
| 2nd Year | 3,967 | 3,694 | 273 | 7.0% |
| Advanced * | 2,205 | 2,065 | 140 | 6.0% |
| LATIN | | | | |
| 1st Year | 3,435 | 3,222 | 213 | 6.0% |
| 2nd Year | 1,659 | 1,631 | 28 | 2.0% |
| Advanced * | 512 | 439 | 73 | 14.0% |
| SPANISH | | | | |
| 1st Year | 22,991 | 20,400 | 2,591 | 11.0% |
| 2nd Year | 11,943 | 11,506 | 437 | 4.0% |
| Advanced * | 5,593 | 5,214 | 593 | 7.0% |
| ALL LANGUAGES ALL LEVELS | 79,908 | 73,857 | 6,051 | 8.0% |
| MODERN LANGUAGES ALL LEVELS | 74,302 | 68,565 | 5,737 | 8.0% |

* All levels third year and above are combined in these figures.

## WHAT HAPPENS IN THE OTHER DISCIPLINES?

We have examined the attrition rates between semesters in the various languages during the 1978-79 schoolyear. While we cannot examine level-by-level enrollments in the various disciplines, we can take a look at what happens to total enrollments in the course of a year.

| Discipline | First Semester Enrollments | Second Semester Enrollments | Number of Students | % of Loss or Gain |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| English and Language Arts | 355,859 | 337,378 | 18,481 | - 5.0% |
| Music | 86,072 | 82,590 | 3,482 | - 4.0% |
| Social Studies | 245,403 | 225,932 | 19,471 | - 8.0% |
| Science | 176,392 | 166,298 | 10,094 | - 6.0% |
| Mathematics | 210,365 | 196,047 | 14,318 | - 7.0% |
| Art | 65,340 | 60,044 | 5,296 | - 8.0% |
| Business | 178,576 | 157,348 | 21,228 | -12.0% |
| Home Economics | 55,355 | 51,963 | 3,382 | - 6.0% |
| Industrial Arts | 112,979 | 101,381 | 11,598 | -10.0% |
| General Agriculture and Agri-Business | 5,406 | 5,744 | 338 | +6.0% |
| FOREIGN LANGUAGES * | 80,285 | 74,199 | 6,086 | - 8.0% |

* Includes those enrolled in "Other Foreign Language."

THANK YOU!

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